

Final script from "Adult Immunization Update" satellite broadcast, June 26, 2003.

Adult Strategies segment.

In this program we have discussed several vaccines that are recommended for the adult population. But not one case of influenza or hepatitis B will be prevented if the vaccines just sit in your refrigerator. Effective strategies are needed to get the vaccine from your refrigerator into your patients. Here is Dr. Serigne Ndiaye from the National Immunization Program to review interventions that have been shown to improve immunization rates at the local level.

Despite the fact that there are safe and effective vaccines to reduce vaccine-preventable diseases, ongoing efforts are needed to improve adult immunization rates. Low coverage rates among adults occur for a variety of reasons, including low community demand for vaccines, lack of access to vaccination services, or system and provider-related factors.

A number of studies have been published that looked at the effectiveness of population-based approaches to increasing vaccination coverage for routinely-recommended vaccines. The Task Force on Community Preventive Services has reviewed these studies. In coordination with CDC staff, they published a summary of interventions that have been found to be effective in raising vaccination coverage levels. These interventions can be used individually or in combination to develop effective adult immunization programs.

The first of these interventions is Client Reminder/Recall Systems. These involve reminding clients when vaccinations are due, or recalling them if they are overdue to receive a recommended vaccine.

Provider Reminder/Recall Systems are similar, but they are self-reminders for the provider that individual patients are due - or overdue - for specific vaccinations. The reminders and recalls can be delivered at the time of the visit in a number of ways. For example, through computer notification, keeping a flow sheet or a checklist in the medical record, or by flagging the medical record with a sticker or stamp.

Assessment and Feedback for Providers is another effective intervention. It involves evaluating a provider's delivery of one or more vaccines and then giving the provider feedback about their performance. CDC has developed computer software that can help providers estimate the vaccination level among their adult patients. The software is called the Adult Clinic Assessment Software Application, better known as ACASA. In addition to estimating vaccine coverage levels, it can help determine an appropriate course of action to improve coverage. Incentives for providers can be included, and the provider's performance can be compared with a goal or standard.

Standing Orders have also been found to be effective. Standing orders allow nonphysician personnel to prescribe or deliver vaccinations by protocol, without direct physician involvement at the time of vaccination. Standing orders were found to increase vaccination rates more than any other vaccination delivery strategy.

Reducing out-of-pocket costs for patients involves offering free vaccinations, providing insurance for vaccines or decreasing co-payments.

Expanding access. Increasing availability of vaccinations can be accomplished by increasing or changing hours when immunization services are offered or opening an express lane for immunizations. By express lane, we mean little or no waiting time for patients. Expanding access also includes delivering services where they were not previously offered, such as emergency rooms, inpatient clinics, or during home visits. And client and provider education was shown to improve vaccination rates when combined with some of the other interventions already mentioned.

In addition to routine vaccines, the task force also reviewed studies looking at approaches to increasing coverage for targeted vaccines. Targeted vaccines are indicated or recommended for groups who are at high risk for a particular disease, such as influenza, pneumococcal disease or hepatitis B.

In 2000, vaccination coverage for adults 18 to 64 years of age with high risk conditions such as heart disease, lung

disease, diabetes, renal dysfunction, and immunosuppression was only 32%, well below the 60% goal of Healthy People 2010. The task force found that strategies combining several interventions were most effective for increasing coverage with targeted vaccines. Such an approach might combine one or more interventions to enhance access to immunization services such as reducing client costs, with at least one provider-based intervention such as standing orders and at least one intervention to increase client demand for vaccination such as client reminders. These interventions can be useful, but specific strategies may vary at the local level. Choosing interventions that work and that are well matched to local needs, priorities, and capabilities are vital to improving vaccination coverage.

For more information on findings of the Task Force, the Guide to Community Preventive Services is available online at [www.thecommunityguide.org](http://www.thecommunityguide.org).

**Announcer:**

In the next year over 30,000 adults will die of vaccine preventable diseases. And it's not necessary. By immunizing adults in a timely manner, we can prevent many deaths, improve the quality of life and save the country \$10 billion in year. Increasing Adult Immunization Rates- What Works, offers primary care providers strategies they can use to increase vaccination rates among adult patients. It's the goal of this instructional program to increase health professionals knowledge about effective ways to provide adults the vaccines they need. The ultimate goal is to reduce the number of needless deaths. What works is an interactive CD-ROM program. It provides CNE, CME and CEU credits based on two hours of instructions to those that complete the course and exam. The program offers learners the opportunity to test their knowledge of vaccine usage. Explore facts about vaccine preventable diseases. Access reference materials and answers to frequently asked questions. Review information about which strategies are effective, strategies such as standing orders, chart reminder, mail or telephone reminders and patient education. Test their knowledge of how to implement these strategies for maximum effect, and develop an action plan for them. This wealth of information is available free to. To receive a copy of the What Works CD-ROM, E-mail your request to [whatworks@attp.org](mailto:whatworks@attp.org) or call 1-800-789-6737.

The Increasing Adult Vaccination Rates: What Works CD is a

joint project of the National Immunization Program and the Association of Teachers of Preventive Medicine. It will help you develop and implement strategies to improve vaccination levels among your adult patients. In addition to requesting the CD by Email, you can also order it using the National Immunization Program online publication ordering system. The CD is free, compliments of CDC and ATPM.

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